

# SAVE SELIM DUZGUN FROM TURKEY'S MILITARY JUNTA!

## Kurdish Rights Activist and Socialist Refused Asylum in Britain

A man who is known by the Turkish military dictatorship to be a supporter of national rights for the 11 million Kurdish people who live in Turkey, and who is a member of the banned socialist organisation 'Dev-Yol', is being refused political asylum by the British Home Office.

### Kurdish Rights

Selim Duzgun is a young man who comes from the part of Kurdistan which lies within the state of Turkey. Throughout his youth he has followed other members of his family in fighting for democracy in Turkey and for national rights for the people of Kurdistan.

On entering High School in his home district of Pulumar Selim joined the socialist organisation Dev-Yol ('Revolutionary Way'). He undertook propaganda activities on behalf of this party, such as fly-posting, distributing leaflets and newspapers, and organising political meetings.

### Military Coup

When the Turkish Generals seized power in September 1980 they immediately outlawed all left-wing parties and started an intensive crack-down on all known militants.

This wave of repression was greatest in Kurdistan where opposition to many right-wing Turkish governments in the past has always been greatest. The military authorities have always seen Kurdish nationalism as a threat to their rule. At present the Kurdish language is banned by the authorities and it is even illegal to describe oneself as 'Kurdish' in public.

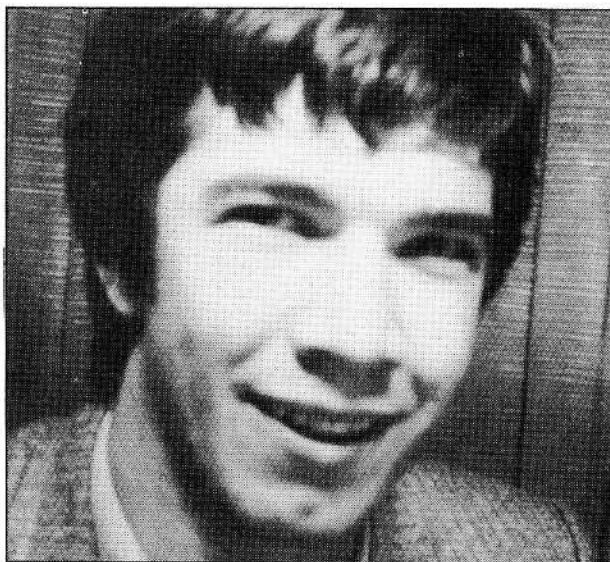
In Selim's home town, the army invaded the streets, declaring a curfew and systematically arresting hundreds of people; particularly young people. The High School Selim attended was closed down and he himself was arrested and interned by the military authorities.

### Surveillance

Selim was released after one month's detention. But in Turkey under the Generals, all political activists are kept under continual surveillance by the authorities and they are liable to be arrested at any time. In such intolerable circumstances, Selim was forced to take a path trodden by many Turkish and Kurdish democrats since the coup of September 1980; he fled his country to seek political asylum abroad.

### Arrival in Britain

In the summer of 1981 Selim managed to obtain a passport and escape Turkey to arrive in Britain, where several of his relatives are settled. After a period of studying English he now finds that the Home Office intend to refuse him further leave to remain as a political refugee and are insisting that he return to Turkey immediately.



### Turkey Today

Turkey today is a country where the military authorities have consolidated their power at the expense of all democratic, leftist and national minority movements. A new law enacted by the dictatorship bans all left-wing parties and trade unions and the Kurdish parties, and imprisons their supporters with sentences that stretch for many years. Several individuals have been tried by the authorities and executed. But many more have met their deaths under torture in the Junta's prisons or whilst resisting repression.

At the present time, in the town of Fatsa in eastern Turkey a mass trial of 759 people is underway. These people are accused of membership of Dev-Yol and the military prosecutor is asking for the death penalty for some 264 of these militants.

### Persecution

We say that if Selim Duzgun is returned to Turkey under the Generals he would face persecution, imprisonment, torture and the threat of death.

As a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the British Government has a clear obligation to grant political asylum to this young man.

We are appealing to you to bring pressure on the Home Office and the Government to ensure that the right of political asylum is granted to Selim Duzgun.

### What you can do

1. Write a letter to the Home Secretary, Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, MP, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1, requesting that he reconsiders his decision to refuse political asylum to Selim Duzgun.

2. Write to your Member of Parliament, c/o House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA, and urge him or her to take up the matter in Parliament.

3. If you are a member of a trade union, political party or professional association, pass a resolution through your branch along the following lines:-

*'This Branch supports the Kurdish democrat and socialist Selim Duzgun in his request for political asylum in Britain. We urge the Home Office to reconsider its decision to refuse him asylum, in the interests of democracy, as we understand he will suffer persecution and imprisonment if forced to return to Turkey.'*

4. Collect signatures on the petition (see over, ask for further copies if necessary) and return to us as soon as possible.

**Please understand that it might only be a matter of days or weeks before the Home Office takes action to remove Selim from Britain, so act immediately!!!**

**Thank You**